
**Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, February 5,
1824, from Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe
Correspondence, Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W.
Gawalt, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe

Monto. Feb. 5. 24.

Dear Sir

The inclosed letter is from a person entirely unknown to me. Yet it seems to expect a confidence which prudence cannot give to a stranger, and as he seems to write under your authority I take the liberty of confiding my answer to yourself directly & of returning his paper to you. I do not know that the publicn of the papers of the old Congress could be objected to, except such as might contain personalities of no consequence to history. But care should be taken that they should be impartially published and not all on one side. We have seen how false a face may be given to history by the garbling of documents. Even during the old Congress and in it's body we had our whigs & tories. Mr. Wagner says that for the present he acknoleges no party, and supposes his continuance in office during 6 yr of my admn a proof of his fidelity and impartiality even while he was a party man. But every one knows that the clerks of the offices had been appd under federal heads who appd federalists only and exclusively that the whole mass of them were federal, and that I medled with none of them. His conversion from vehemence to neutrality having taken place only since his withdrawing from the Editorship of the Baltimore Federalist, the proofs of it have not yet reached our part of the country. Yet his word need not be doubted

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further than as we all believe ourselves neutral. He is certainly capable of the task, and has the adge. Of being familiar with the arrangment of the papers, yet not more so than the gentlemen now in that office & who have been longer in it than he was. On the whole my opinion is favble to the publicn when it can be verily made and that it's want is not so pressing but that it is better to let it wait till it can be so done as to give to history it's true face.

I shall be among those most rejoiced at seeing LaFayette again. But I hope Congress is prepared to go thro' with their compliment worthily. That they do not mean to invite him merely to dine . That provision will be made for his expences here, which you know he cannot afford, and that they will not send him back empty handed. This would place us under indelible disgrace in Europe. Some 3 or 4 good townships in Missouri or Louisiana or Alibama &c should be in readiness for him, and may restore his family to the opulence which his virtues have lost to them. I suppose the time of the visit will be left to himself, as the death of Louis XVIII which had probably taken place or soon must do so, will produce a crisis in his own country from which he could not absent himself by a visit of compliments ever& affecty. Yours Th. J.

FC (Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress).